

Suicide - 1935

# FORMER BANK TELLER ENDS PROBE CAUSE LIFE WITH GAS OF CLERK'S SUICIDE

*Call 2-23-35*  
Edward Pratt, Business Man  
Of Durham, N. C., Com-  
mits Suicide

By John A. Fouché

D U R H A M, N. C. —

(ANP)—In despair because of continued illness, Edward Decatur Pratt, prominent business man of this city and a member of one of the pioneer families of this section, committed suicide by asphyxiation Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 12, at his home, 1804 Fayetteville street.

Mr. Pratt was found by his sister, Miss Sarah Pratt, when she returned home from her duties as a teacher in the city school system. He was lying across the bed. The gas heater was turned out.

Mr. Pratt had been in ill health for more than a year. He recently had been a patient at Lincoln hospital and prior to entering the hospital he had spent several months in Asheville in an effort to regain his health.

**Mortgage Company Employee**

A native of this city, the 37-year-old man was a graduate of North Carolina College for Negroes. Upon his graduation from that institution he entered the employ of the Mechanics and Farmers bank, serving as teller there from 1919 to 1929. He resigned his position in 1929 and was employed as secretary-manager of the Mortgage company of Durham. A man of exceptional business ability, he filled this post until his death.

Several years ago he married Miss Evaline Evans of Washington. A girl, Jean, now six years old, was born to this union. Beside his widow and daughter, two sisters survive.

Funeral services were conducted from the home Thursday afternoon. The Rev. V. C. Hodgers, pastor of St. Joseph A. M. E. church officiated.

The following business associates and friends served as pallbearers:

T. D. Parham, Leotis Bracia, H. M. Michaux, Joseph Goodloe, John Holloway, J. H. Wheeler, James Amey, J. A. Payne, J. H. Hugh and Wendell White.

Immediately the General Accounting Office began checking the accounts. Although it was rumored that Goodrich's records were in good order, Mr. Towers told the Tribune, late Tuesday, that no report on the auditing had been made by the General Accounting Office as yet.

At the Bureau of Investigation of the General Accounting Office, it was stated that it would take nearly a month to complete the auditing of the office books.

## Private Funeral

Private funeral services were held Sunday from the McGuire Funeral Home. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mary A. Goodrich, five children, Mrs. Altona G. Robinson, Mrs. Lillian Smallwood, Madge, Alice and Rita Goodrich, two sisters, Mrs. Genevieve Betz and Mrs. Ula Jones of Baltimore, and a brother, William Goodrich of London, England.

Records Audited After  
Man Is Found Dead

*3-23-35*  
in Friend's Home

Following the mysterious suicide of Harry Goodrich, 52, clerk in the District collector's office early Friday morning, District Building officials began checking records in the tax office to determine if any shortage existed in the accounts of the dead man.

Specifically, the auditors are seeking to discover if any connection exists between the death of Goodrich and the arrest, two weeks ago, of Alfred J. Moss, another clerk, who was held on a charge of obtaining money under false pretenses.

Moss was arrested when R. C. Tilghman white, of Benning, D.C., reported an alleged payment of \$20 to the clerk "to forget" a tax penalty due the District. Tilghman gave Moss marked money, police said. He is now at liberty under \$300 bond.

## Found Dead

The body of Goodrich was found in the bath room of the home of Mrs. Annie Jackson, 600 block of Division Avenue Northeast, early Friday morning, with a bullet wound in the brain. A 32-caliber bullet had been fired through the roof of his mouth, police reported. The Jackson home is on a short distance from his own residence, 5620 W. H. Road, Fairmont Heights, Ind.

Goodrich who was the father of five children is said to have been a close friend of Mr. Moss, the two having worked at the tax office for over a score of years.

## Orders Probe

In an effort to ascertain the cause of Goodrich's death, Chatham Towers, white, District tax collector, ordered the auditing of the office books of the dead clerk, Im-

# 19-YEAR-OLD VIRGINIA GIRL KILLS HERSELF

*Call 11-4-35*  
Uses Employer's Pistol to  
Fire Shot Into Left  
Temple

*Russell City Ind*  
LYNCHBURG, Va.—Using her employer's pistol, Miss Dorothy Mae Jackson, 19-year-old honor graduate of the Dunbar high school here, shot herself fatally in the left temple Friday morning, October 25.

Her body was found in bed in the room at the employer's house 504 Jackson street, with her head buried in her pillow. No motive for her rash act has been found by the coroner or police who are investigating the case.

## Didn't Hear Shot

Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Smith, for whom the girl had worked since her graduation in 1934, told police that they did not hear the shot which killed the girl. The shot might have been fired while the radio was playing or it might be muffled by the pillow, police said. When found, the girl had been dead eight or 10 hours, the coroner